

# BLACKSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

## NEWS RELEASE

**DATE:** June 28, 2006

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**SUBJECT:** Fireworks

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Safety and celebration should go hand-in-hand, particularly on Independence Day.

Each year, fireworks cause more than 8,000 injuries nationwide. As we near the celebration of our nation's independence on July 4, the Blacksburg Police Department would like to remind our citizens of the local ordinance governing the discharge of fireworks, and to provide a few safety tips for the holiday.

- Wear safety goggles when using fireworks
- Keep a fire extinguisher or bucket of water nearby.
- Ensure that pets are kept indoors
- Never assume that a 'dud' firework is safe
- Keep all spectators, especially children, a safe distance away

**Section 17-310. General prohibition against possession, sale, use, etc., of fireworks.**

(a) Except as may be otherwise provided in this Code or other ordinance, it shall be unlawful for any person to transport, manufacture, store, sell, offer or expose for sale, or to possess, buy, use ignite or explode any firecracker, torpedo, skyrocket or other substance or thing of whatever form or construction containing nitrates, chlorates, oxalates, sulphides of lead, barium, antimony, nitroglycerine, phosphorus or any other explosive or inflammable compound or substance, and intended or commonly known as fireworks.

**(b) This section shall not apply to Roman candles, sparklers, pharaoh's serpents or caps for pistols, nor shall it apply to pinwheels commonly known as whirligigs or spinning jennies, when used, ignited or exploded on private property with the consent of the owner of such property.**

(c) This section shall have no application to any officer or member of the armed forces of this state, or of the United States, while acting within the scope of his authority and duties as such, nor to any offer of sale or sale of fireworks to any authorized agent of such armed forces, nor shall it be applicable to the sale or use of materials or equipment, otherwise prohibited by law, when such materials or equipment are used or to be used by any person for signaling or other emergency use in the operation of any boat, railroad train or other vehicle for the transportation of persons or property.

**State law references:** Authority of town to prohibit fireworks, Code of Virginia, §§ 15.2-1113, 59.1-148.

During the year, law enforcement agencies receive numerous calls of late-night discharging of fireworks. This ordinance is in effect year-round. Persons convicted of violating this ordinance are subject to a \$300.00 fine for the first offense, \$500.00 for the second offense. Please be safe this Independence Day, and for more information, you may contact the Blacksburg Police or your local law enforcement agency.